

An additional 351 Tennessee children have permanent foster care or independent living as their goal. For these children, the Department of Children's Services has determined that the child cannot return home, but it is not in the child's best interest to terminate parental rights. This could be because the child has an ongoing relationship with the parent even though the child cannot return home (perhaps the parent is mentally ill or incarcerated). A child can be in permanent foster care or have emancipation as a goal because the child refuses adoption (in Tennessee a child over the age of 14 must consent to his/her adoption) or because the child would suffer loss of inheritance rights or for other reasons.

Emancipation

The Department provides emancipation services to all foster care youth, ages 16 and above. These services are designed to give youth the necessary skills to become productive citizens. Youth are taught skills to assist them in employment, decision-making, problem solving, housing, transportation, education, and knowledge of community resources.

DCS regions are provided with funds to enhance the provision of emancipation services to youth. During FY98-99, case managers spent \$16,392 to provide youth with field trips, special incentive trips, incentives for improved or good grades, leadership training, fees for ACTs or SATs, reimbursement for books, supplies or tuition for post secondary education, transportation costs, or clothes for job interviews or uniforms for work.

Family Crisis Intervention Program

Since fiscal year 1996-1997, the Department of Children's Service's Family Crisis Intervention Program (FCIP) has provided services to "unruly" children. An unruly child has committed an offense that would not be illegal for an adult; this child could be a truant, a runaway, or be beyond the control of the parent. By law, if the Department is unsuccessful in helping the family resolve issues with the child, this new program may certify to the court that further intervention is warranted, including, but not limited to, commitment to state custody. The FCIP program started with the assumption that collaboration with the juvenile court and community was an absolute requirement. The law